## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5190

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

SECRETSECTION 1 OF 3 CAIRO 8401

**EXDIS** 

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FOR EG US SA XA

SUBJ: DISCUSSIONS WITH GOE ON HORN OF AFRICA

SUMMARY: DEPASSTSEC SEELYE HAD LONG EXCHANGE WITH MINSTATE RIAD ON HORN OF AFRICA MAY 18. RIAD BELIEVES SIAD SINCERE IN MOVING AWAY FROM SOVIETS AND ADVOCATES US SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA.

HE THOUGHT SIAD WOULD ACCEPT PROMINENT FRENCH ARMS ROLE BECAUSE OF DJIBOUTI LINK. GOE ALREADY SENDING SOMALIA "LIGHT ARMS". SOVIET PENETRATION OF SOMALIA GOVT REQUIRES THAT SIAD GO SLOWLY. HE THOUGHT MENGISTU REGIME COULD CHANGE AT ANY TIME, BUT IF IT LASTS UNTIL JULY MENGISTU WILL, WITH AID OF SOVIETS, HAVE CONSILIDATED HIS POWER. SITUATION INDJIBOUTI SEEMS PROMISING; SOMALIS' POSITION HAS MODERATED SINCE THEY SEE DYNAMICS FAVORING EVENTUAL UNION. GOE PLEASED THAT US "BEGINNING TO MOVE" IN AFRICA SECRET

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IN VIEW OF WHAT HE CONSIDERS WELL PLANNED SOVIET STRATEGY THERE. RIAD WAS REASSURED THAT SAUDIS SUPPORT GOE POSITION FAVORING AUTONOMY OVER INDEPENDENCE FOR ERITREA AS STABILIZING ELEMENT. END SUMMARY

1. IN ABSENCE FONMIN FAHMY WHO IN ALEXANDRIA, DEPTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SEELYE ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR MET WITH MINSTATE MOHAMMED RIAD MAY 18 TO DESCRIBE US POLICY ON HORN, BRIEF HIM ON DISCUSSIONS WITH SAUDIS AND OBTAIN GOE VIEWS. SEELYE SAID HIS DESIRE TO CONSULT WITH GOE GREW OUT OF CARTER-SADAT DISCUSSIONS IN

WASHINGTON AND AGREEMENT THAT WE CONSULT ON HORN. MOST IMMEDIATE US POLICY QUESTION CONCERNS SOMALIA, BUT HE WOULD WELCOME RIAD'S VIEWS ON ALL COUNTRIES ON HORN.

- 2. ETHIOPIA. SEELYE SAID US POSITION HAD GREATLY DETERIORATED OVER LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, CULMINATING IN EVICTION OF FIVE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, AND RELATIONS ARE AT NEW LOW. US HAD ATTEMPTED TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM PRESENCE IN EGHIOPIA DESPITE NON-CONGENIAL NATURE OF REGIME IN INTEREST OF LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP. WE STILL HAVE MANY FRIENDS THERE. TURNING POINT IN ETHIOPIAN POLICY HAD COME WITH ETHIOPIAN DECISION LAST DECEMBER TO TURN TO USSR FOR ARMS. SINCE MENGISTU ELIMINATION OF RIVALS IN FEBRUARY '77 HE HAS CLEARLY IDENTIFIED ETHIOPIA WITH USSR. NEVERTHELESS, WE WANT TO MAINTAIN OUR EMBASSY AND AID MISSION IN ORDER TO GIVE HOPE TO FRIENDLY ELEMENTS AND MAINTAIN LIAISON WITH OAU HEADQUARTERS.
- 3. SOMALIA: SEELYE SAID US HAS RECEIVED NUMEROUS SIGNALS THAT SIAD BARRE DESIRES TO IMPROVE RELATIONS INCLUDING DIRECT RREQUEST FROM SIAD CONVEYED THROUGH HIS AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON FOR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE. WE ARE PREPARED TO SEND AN ECONOMIC SURVEY TEAM AND PROVIDE SOME ASSISTANCE. WHAT WE MIGHT DO ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE WILL BE DETERMINED WITHIN CONTEXT OF GLOBAL REVIEW ON ARMS TRANSFERS. MEANWHILE AND ON CONTINGENCY BASIS, WE ARE ALSO CONSIDERING INFORMALLY POSSIBILITY OF SOME TYPE OF ARMS SUPPLY CONSORTIUM WHICH WOULD INCLUDE SECRET

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SEVERAL WESTERN POWERS. WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT SOMALIA WILL INSIST ON SOME US PARTICIPATION AS A TANGIBLE DEMONSTRATION OF US POLITICAL COMMITMENT. ONE PROBLEM WE FACE IS THAT OUR EMBASSY IN MOGADISCIO HAS LITTLE DIRECT CONTACT AND OUR AMBASSADOR RECENTLY WAITED TWO WEEKS FOR AN APPOINTMENT THAT SIAD NEVER GRANTED. AMB WILL BE RETURNING THIS WEEK AND WE WILL SEE WHETHER OR NOT HE IS RECEIVED BY SIAD. SEELYE WONDERED WHETHER GOE BELIEVES SIAD REALLY WANTS TO SHIFT POLICY ORIENTATION OR IS HE PLAYING A GAME TO USE SAUDIS AND US AS PLOY TO GET MORE FROM SOVIETS. IS THERE ALTERNATIVELY A POSSIBILITY THAT HE IS PRISONER OF PRO-SOVIET ELEMENTS WHO OPPOSE POLICY SHIFT TO WEST? US RECOGNIZES OF COURSE THAT DISENGAGEMENT PROCESS WOULD BE DIFFICULT SINCE SOVIETS ARE DEEPLY IMPLANTED AND ANY ATTEMPT TO DO SO

COULD PERHAPS THREATEN SIAD'S POSITION. US IS PROCEEDING ON BASIS THAT SIAD IS SINCERE BUT WE ARE NOT SENDING ECONOMIC SURVEY TEAM UNTIL ASSURED THAT IT WILL HAVE ACCESS TO OFFICIALS AND BE A LE TO MOVE

AROUND. SOMALI AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON HAS IN PAST TENDED TO EXAGGERATE SIAD'S DISPOSITION TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH US. SEELYE SAID SAUDI FONMIN PRINCE SAUD HAS EXCELLENT GRASP OF SITUATION IN THE HORN AND SAUDIS HAVE AGREED TO HELP SOMALIA. SAUD BELIEVES SIAD WANT TO MOVE BECAUSE OF NEW SOVIET RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS CHIEF ADVERSARY AND NOT BECAUSE OF PREDILICTION

FOR THE WEST, THAT HE IS NOT A PRISONER OF PRO-SOVIET ELEMENTS, BUT WANTS TO BE CERTAIN OF NEW COMMITMENTS BEFORE ACTING.

4. RIAD SIAD HE WAS AWARE OF SIAD'S REFUSAL TO SEE US AMBASSADOR AND GOE HAD TRIED TO PAVE THE WAY. ITS AMBASSADOR IN MOGADISCIO HAD BEEN TOLD ONLY REASON SIAD DID NOT RECEIVE US AMBASSADOR WAS THAT HE OUT OF CAPITAL AND HE WOULD SEE HIM UPON AMBASSADOR'S RETURN. RIAD SAID GOE HAS ALREADY DECIDED TO HELP SOMALIA AND IS SENDING LIGNT MILITARY WEAPONS WHICH IS ALL IT CAN DO. SAUDIS ARE THINKING SERIOUSLY OF GIVING ASSISTANCE BUT BULK OF IT NOT YET ARRIVED. IN ADDITION, THE SHAH HAD TOLD PM SALIM DURING MARCH VISIT TO TEHRAN THAT IRAN TOO PLANS TO ASSIST AND IRANIAN SECRET

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FOREIGN MINISTER WILL SOON VISIT SOMALIA.

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5. RIAD SAID SOMALIA POSED "VERY DIFFICULT EQUATION". IT HAS A BASIC PROBLEM IN THAT IT CONSIDERS OGADEN ONE OF FIVE STARS IN ITS FLAG AND IN PAST US, EGYPT AND OTHERS SUPPORTED ETHIOPIAN AND WOULD NOT HEAR OF SEPARATION OF OGADEN, SINCE IT MIGHT HAVE MEANT DISMEMBERMENT OF ETHIOPIA. USSR HAD EXPLOITED THE SITUATION BECAUSE OF SOMALIA'S STRATEGIC POSITION ON THE RED SEA AND INDIAN OCEAN. BARRE HAD RECENTLY TOLD RIAD THAT NASSER HIMSELF HAD TOLD HIM TO GO AHEAD AND ACCEPT SOVIET ASSISTANCE. SIAD HAD INSISTED TO RIAD THAT THERE ARE NO SOVIET BASES IN SOMALIA. AFTER MENGISTU CAME TO POWER SOVIETS DECIDED TO ASSIST HIM EITHER FOR

OPPORTUNISTIC OR STRATEGIC REASONS. SOVIETS DO NOT ADMIT THAT OGADEN OR ERITREA BE SEPARATED BUT ARE PUSHING IDEAS OF CONFEDERATION OF ETHIOPIA, SOMAILIA, DJIBOUTI AND SOUTH YEMEN.

SIAD, HOWEVER, CANNOT AGREE WITH THIS NEW SOVIET POLICY AND SECRET

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IS NOW SEEKING ASSITANCE ELSEWHERE. BUT TO BE FAIR, RIAD SAID, SIAD HAD ASKED BEFORE FOR ASSISTAANCE AND NOBODY HAD PAID ANY ATTENTION. (SEELYE INTERJECTED THAT US HAD PROVIDED SIAD WITH ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE). SIAD NOW INSISTS ON ASSURANCES OF BLOBAL ASSISTANCE . HE HAS TOLD EGYPT THAT HE WANTS TO GET RID OF SOVIETS AND "BELONG TO YOU AS MUCH AS YOU BELONG TO EACH OTHER" SPEAKING OF MUSLIM AND ARAB COUNTRIES. EGYPT HAS DECIDED TO HELP.

6. ONE OF KEY QUESTIONS, RIAD SAID, CONCERNS POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE OF ETHIOPIAN REGIME, WHICH AT PRESENT TIME SOVIETS, EAST GERMANS AND YUGOSLAVS ARE FULL BACKING. CHANGE COULD HAPPEN AT ANY TIME TO TOTALLY PRO-WEST OR MODERATE REGIME AT WHICH TIME WE WILL ALL COME TO ETHIOPIAN ASISTANCE AND SAY THAT OGADEN AND ERITREA MUST NOT RPT NOT BE SEPARTED. THE SOVIETS, HOWEVER, ARE PERFRECTLY CAPABLE OF DOING SO EVEN THOUGH THEY NOW SPEAK AGAINST SEPARATION. IF CHANGE OF REGIMES TOOK PLACE WOULD SIAD RETURN TO USSR? THIS IS QUESTION THAT MUST BE FACED. SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW THE FUTURE RIAD ASKED, SHOULD WE TAKE THE RISK AND HELP SIAD OR NOT? EGYPT HAS DECICED TO TALKE THAT RISK BECAUSE IT THINKS SIAD, IN VIEW OF HIS EXPERIENCE WITH SOVIETS, WILL THINK TWO OR THREE TIMES BEFORE TURNING BACK TO USSR. IN ADDITION, SIAD HAS BECOME A MODERATE ON DJIBOUTI. HE IS NOW SAYING PEOPLE OF DJIBOUTI MUST HAVE FREE CHOICE ABOUT THEIR FUTURE. HE DOES NOT WANT IT NOW BECAUSE IT WOULD CAUSE TROUBLE WITH BOTHE ETHIOPIA AND USSR. FURTHERMORE, GOE BELIEVES ANY ASSISTANCE RECEIVED NOW WILL MAKE SIAD LOOK AT THINGS DIFFERENTLY IN THE FUTURE.

7. RIAD THOUGHT THERE IS SOVIET PENETRATION ADN SIAD IS TRYING TO GET RID OF IT. HE THOUGH SIEDING OF PRO-SOVIET VICE PRESIDENT SAMANTAR ON RECENT VISIT TO USSR MAY BE PRELUDE TO SUCH AN EFFORT SINCE HE WILL COME BACK FROM MOSCOW EMPTY HANDED. RIAD THOUGHT SOMALIA MIGHT LIKE TO HAVE HELP FROM FRANCE. HE WANTS TO END SOVIET PRENETRATION BEFORE ACCEPTING WESTERN HELP PUBLICLY . RIAD EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT US SHOULD CONTINUE TALKING WITH SOMAILA AMBASSADOR IN SECRET

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WASHINGTON SINCE ONE MUST MOVE VERY CAUTIOUSLY AND AMBASSADOR CAN CARRY MESSAGES ALTHOUGH HE UNDERSTANDE NEED FOR ASSURANCES FROM SIAD PERSONALLY. RIAD SIAD THAT GOE BELIEVES SIAD WANTS TO GET RIDE OF SOVIET PENETRATION BEFORE GOING PUBLIC WITH CHANGE IN ORIENTATIO. BEFORE DOING SO, HE NEEDS TANGILE

ALTERNATIVES. RIAD CONCLUDED THAT THE WST(A) SHOULD HELP, BUT VERY DISCREETLY; (B) RECOGNIZE THE RISK INVOLVED; AND (C) UNDERSTAND THAT SIAD IF HELPED IN TIME OF NEED WILL NOT FORGET IN THE FUTURE.

8. WITH REGARD TO RIAD'S EARLIER REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE CHANGE IN ETHIOPIAN REGIME, SEELYE SAID THAT US ASSESSMENT IS THAT IMMINENT CHANGE NOT RPT NOT LIKELY, ALTHOUGH OF COURSE ONE BULLET COULD CHANGE THINGS A LOT. RIAD SAID THAT IF MENGISTU LASTS UNTIL JULY HE WILL HAVE CONSOLIDATED HIS POWER. SEELYE MENTIONED ADDITIONAL POSSIBILITY OF MENGISTUR BEING REPLACED BY A LEFTIST GROUP SUCH AS EPRP. THERE WAS MUTAL AGREEMENT THAT, IN SPITE OF INSULTS, BUT US AND EGYT SHOULD MAINTAIN PRESENCE IN ADDIS.

9. SEELYE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT FRAGMENTATION OF ETHIOPIA, WHICH HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE DE FACTO, LIKELY TO LAST FOR MANY YEARS EVEN THOUGH SEPARATE STATES MAY NOT RESULT. RIAD SAID THAT IF REAL FRAGMENTATION TAKES PLACE AND OGDEN SECEDES SOMALIS WOULD NO LONGER HAVE ANY NEED FOR LETTING SOVIETS RETURN.

10. SEELYE SAID US DOES NOT BELIEVE INDEPENDENCE OF ERITREA IS FORMULA FOR STABILITY IN VIEW OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE ANY ADDIS GOVERNMENT WOULD PLACE IN ACCESS TO ASSAB, MASSAWA AND CENTRAL ERITREAN HIGHLANDS. SAUDIS AGREE. US SUPPORT INDEPENDENCE OF DJIBOUTI, AS DO SAUDIS, BUT SAUDIS EXPECT THAT DYNAMICS OF SITUATION WILL LEAD TO EVENTUAL UNION WITH SOMALIA. RIAD SAID GOE HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN FOREGRONT OF THOSE FAVORING UNGA RESOLUTION ON AUTONOMY FOR ERITREA, IN OPPOSITIONTO OTHER ARAB STATES WHO HAVE FAVORED INDEPENDENCE. HE WAS GLAD TO HEAR THAT SAUDIS HAVE SHIFTED TO EGYPTIAN POSITION. AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO HIS CONVERASATION WITH VP MUBARAK MAY 17 IN WHICH SECRET

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VP SAID EGYPT HAS NO ALTERNATIVE BUT DO ALL IN ITS POWER TO USE ERITREA AS MEANS OF PRESSURE AGAINST MENGISTU. RIAD RESPONDED THAT THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENCE AND GOE ACTING ALSO IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE SUDAN. RIAD CONFIRMED THAT EGYPTIAN IS SENDING "SOME THINGS" TO ERITREA FOR THIS PURPOSE.

11. WITH REGARD TO DJIBOUT IHE SAID IT WOULD APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP IN OAU AT JULY SUMMIT MEETING AND FOR MEMBERSHIP IN ARAB LEAGUE IN SEPTEMBER. RIAD THOUGH SIAD WILL TRY TO USE DJIBOUTI TO GET IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH FRENCH. SEELYE ASKED WHETHER THIS MEANT SIAD WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH FRENCH ARMS. US WOULD FIND PROSPECT OF FRENCH ARMS TO SOMALIA AS AN ATTRACTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO US AS SOURCE. WOULD SIAD INSIST ON SOME US ARMS FOR POLITICAL REASONS? RIAD SAID SIAD WOULD WELCOME FRENCH ARMS BUT MIGHT BE THINKING US WOULD OFFER BETTER TERMS AS WELL AS STRENGTHEN HIS OWN POLITICAL SITUATION. IF HE TURNS TO US IT IS "VERY IMPORTANT STEP". SEELYE SAID WE HAVE REPORTS SIAD HAS INTERPRETED US RESPONSE ON ARMS (I.E.

AWAITING RESULTS GLOBAL REVIEW PROCESS ) AS TURN DOWN. THIS IS WRONG SINCE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS POLICY IS NOT YET FIRM AND WE MUST CONSULT WITH CONGRESS. RIAD SAID UNFORTUNATELY SIAD IS LIKE NASSER AND UNABLE TO UDERSTAND SUCH THINGS AS ROLE OF CONGRESS.

12. SEELYE SAID PROSPECTS FOR DJIBOUTI APPEAR GOOD AFTER RECENT ELECTIONS US HAS ESTABLISHED CONSULATE AND WILL OPEN EMBASSY AS SOON AS INDEPENDENCE DECLARED. RIAD AGREED SITUATION LOOKS PROMISING AND SAID ARAB LEAGUE STUDYING ASSISTANCE TO DJIBOUTI. EGYPT IS IN PROCESS TO NAMING FIVE TECHNICIANS TO SEND.

13. SUDAN. SEELYE SAID SUDAN WAS KEY COUNTRY AND WE NOW HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH IT. WE ARE PREPARING TO SELL - C-130'S. RIAD INTERJECTETED THAT SUDANESE UNHAPPLY WITH DELIVERY DATE IN 1979, WHICH THEY HAD LEARNED FROM LOCKHEED. SEELYE SAID THIS IS PROBABLY NOT THE FINAL WORD. IN ADDITION SUDANESE WANT SECRET

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F5E'S, APCS AND GROUND ENVIRONMENT RADAR, AND US WILL BE STUDYING THESE REQUESTS.

SECRET

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**EXDIS** 

14. KENYA. SEELYE SAID US HAD ALREADY PROVIDED F5E'S AND WISHED TO HELP KENYA MAINTAIN ITS INTEGRITY IN THE FACE OF ITS HOSTILE NEIGHBORS. IT IS HARD TO PREDICT WHAT WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER KENYATTA BUT THERE IS REASONABLE CHANCE THAT

SUCCESSION WILL BE ORDERLY. US WOULD LIKE TO SEE EGYPT, SAUDIS AND SUDAN IMPROVE THEIR RELATIONS WITH KENYA SINCE THIS WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO HORN PEACE AND STABILITY. WE RECOGNIZE THAT ARABS MAY BE CONCERNED REGARDING KENYA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL. RAID SAID HE HAD HAD LONG TALK WITH BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NAIROBI SOME TIME AGO AND HE HAD SAID THE SAME THING. HE ALSO ASSURED RIAD THAT NO GOK OFFICIAL HAD PARTICIPATED IN ENTEBBE RAID. EGYPT'S PROBLEM WITH KENYA WAS TANZANIA. IT BELIEVES NYERERE IS RESISTING ANY SOVIET PENETRATION IN THE AREA. NYERERE HAD SENT MESSAGE TO MACHEL WARNING HIM NOT TO CONCLUDE TREATY WITH SOVIETS. EGYPT DOES NOT SECRET

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WISH TO AGGRAVATE TANZANIA SINCE ALONG WITH ZAMBIA BOTH WANT TO DISMISS THE SOVIETS. IN KENYA, RIAD SAID, THERE IS NO REAL LEADER TODAY. PERHAPS THERE IS ONE BEHIND THE SCENES -- THE SON OF KENYATTA OR THE VICE PRESIDENT?

15. SOVIET UNION. RIAD SAID HE WAS PLEASE THAT US APPEARED TO BE MOVING AT LAST IN AFRICA. AT CERTAIN MOMENTS IT DOES NOT APPEAR TO FEAR SOVIET PENETRATION AND BRITISH SAY THERE IS NO SOVIET STRATEGY BUT THEY ARE ONLY EXPLOITING TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY. WHAT DID US THINK? SEELYE SAID THAT THERE ARE VARYING VIEWS WITHIN USG. HE PERSONALLY AGREED THAT SOVIETS WERE EXPLOITING TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY BUT AT THE SAME TIME SOVIETS MUST HAVE OVERALL PLAN. IT IS NOT RPT NOT ACCURATE TO BELIEVE THAT US IS NOT RPT NOT CONCERNED ABOUT SOVIET ADVANCES IN AFRICA. RIAD SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WAS A SOVIT STRATEGY, FOR EXAMPLE, TWO SOCIALIST COUNTRIES' AMBASSADORS HAD COME TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT ETHIOPIA ON INSTRUCTIONS. ONE ONLY HAS TO LOOK AT THE MAP TO SEE THAT SOVIET OBJECTIVES ARE ON INDIAN OCEA, ATLANTIC, MEDITERRAEAN AND RED SEA. VERY LEST ONE CAN SAY IS THAT IT IS A BLEND OF STRATEGY AND OPPORTUNISM. SOVIETS ARE ACTIVE IN ZIMBABWE AND IF SUCCESSFUL WILL CONTROL THE COPPER AND CHROME BELTS FROM THE ATLANTIC TO INDIAN OCEAN. SEELYE INTERNJECTED THAT USG POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AIMS, AMONG OTHER THINGS TO THWART SOVIET PENETRATION. LIKEWISE, IN THE HORN, RIAD RECALLED, IN JANUARY '76 AT ADDIS SUMMIT ON ANGOLA SIAD HAD SUBMITTED A CONFEDERATION PLAN TO ETHIOPIA. NOW PLAN IS BEING SUBMITTED TO SIMALIA BY THE THIOPIAN S BUT IT IS SOVIET PLAN. RIAD URGED THAT THE US BE PATIENT WITH MACHEL, SIAD AND OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS. SEELYE SAID US RELATIONSHIP WITH MACHEL IS STATIFACTORY.

16. DEPUTY ASSTSEC SEELYE HAS CLEARED THIS MESSAGE. EILTS

SECRET

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Margaret P. Grafeld	Declassified/Released	US Department of State	EO Systematic Review	22 May 2009

## Message Attributes

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